

American people in order to pass their election legislation because that is exactly—exactly—what Democrats are doing.

Democrats have been determined to pass H.R. 1, their Federal takeover of State election law, since 2019. Back in 2019, of course, they told us we needed it because our democracy was broken, but then the 2020 elections happened and, lo and behold, Democrats won, and all of a sudden our democracy was working fine—a record turnout, I might add, in the 2020 election, the largest since the year 1900.

But Democrats still want to pass H.R. 1, now because, as both the Speaker of the House and the House Democratic whip have openly admitted, they think it will improve their electoral chances, and so they have manufactured a crisis in the hope of convincing the American people of the need to pass Democratic legislation.

There is a reason that Senate Democrats haven't managed to pass H.R. 1 so far, and that is because it is a terrible bill. The bill would seize power from States when it comes to regulating and administering elections, an authority that States have held, literally, since the founding.

It would implement public funding of political campaigns, which would mean that billions of government dollars, money that belongs to the American taxpayer, would go to funding yard signs and attack ads—I am sure something the American taxpayers would be really happy to see.

It would impose onerous new requirements and restrictions on political speech. It would open up private Americans to retaliation and intimidation simply for making a donation to support a cause that they believe in.

It would effectively eliminate States' voter ID requirements. It would politicize the IRS by allowing the IRS to consider organizations' beliefs when deciding whether or not to grant them tax-exempt status, and the list goes on.

No less an organization than the American Civil Liberties Union opposed—opposed—H.R. 1 in the last Congress because the bill would “unconstitutionally burden speech and associational rights.”

Let me just repeat that for emphasis. The American Civil Liberties Union opposed this legislation because it would “unconstitutionally burden speech and associational rights.”

In his speech last week, President Biden expressed concern about States like Georgia “moving from independent election administrators who work for the people to polarized state legislatures and partisan actors who work for political parties.”

It made me wonder if the President even knows what is in H.R. 1 because H.R. 1 would make the Federal Election Commission, the primary enforcer of election law in this country, into a partisan body.

Instead of an independent Commission, evenly divided between Demo-

crats and Republicans, the FEC would become, to borrow the President's words, a partisan actor that works for political parties.

If the President is concerned about independent election administrators becoming partisan actors, perhaps he should take a look at revising his party's legislation.

Since they have so far been unable to get their partisan election takeover through the Senate, Democrats are now threatening to include election measures in the partisan tax-and-spending bill that they are planning to force through Congress using rules which allow them to evade objections from the Senate minority.

Their idea is to provide financial incentives for States to adopt Democrats' preferred election standards. I suspect it is an abuse of Senate budget rules that will hopefully not make it through the legislative process. But it is another disturbing sign of how committed Democrats are to shoving through their partisan election measure.

For the sake of our democracy, let's hope that they will continue to be unsuccessful.

While I am mentioning free speech and troubling narratives coming from the White House, I want to mention the White House Press Secretary's comments last week.

The Press Secretary noted that the Biden administration is “flagging problematic posts for Facebook that spread disinformation” and later stated that if individuals are banned on one social media platform, they should be banned on all platforms. Wow.

Now, there is no question that private companies have the right to moderate activity and content on their platforms—although, for the sake of the free exchange of ideas and a culture of freedom of speech, they should be very transparent, principled, and accountable about doing so.

We all remember the backpedaling that recently occurred when media and social media realized that they might have too hastily censored the theory that the coronavirus originated in a Wuhan lab.

But while private companies have a right to police information on their sites, the government cannot be in the middle of colluding with social media platforms to censor Americans' speech. And the Biden administration has no business telling Facebook or Twitter whom they should ban from their platforms.

We condemn governments in other countries, like the Chinese Communist Party, that do exactly this. We condemned the Cuban Government just last week for shutting down their population's access to the internet in the face of widespread protests.

If the government gets into censoring disinformation on social media, as compared to, say, terrorist propaganda, where does it end?

As we are rapidly finding out, “disinformation” tends to mean what-

ever those with censorship power want it to mean.

Is the Biden administration going to start pushing social media companies to censor anything that contradicts its narrative on the supposed voting rights crisis? Is it going to suggest that anyone defending States' election laws is spreading misinformation?

The best way to counter misinformation about lifesaving vaccines is not censorship; it is broadly sharing more persuasive and more accurate information.

The White House Press Secretary's casual admission of a Presidential administration actively monitoring Americans and colluding with social media companies to censor information is deeply troubling, and I am concerned that the Biden administration is moving us down the road toward government control of Americans' speech.

I would like to see the White House worrying about its own campaign of disinformation on State voting laws. That would be a better use of its time than trampling on freedom of speech by censoring Americans' activities on social media.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, yesterday, the majority leader teed up the first procedural vote on an infrastructure bill that no one has seen yet.

Our colleagues on both sides of the aisle have been hard at work for weeks negotiating in good faith to get a balanced agreement on an issue that virtually everyone supports. Infrastructure is not a partisan issue.

But at this time, we have no details about how this deal would achieve our common goals. There is no bill text. We don't know what is in and what is out, no information about how it will be paid for and no score from the Congressional Budget Office to tell us whether the proposed pay-fors are credible.

Now, we have been through an extraordinary pandemic, during which we have done some pretty extraordinary things when it comes to spending at the Federal level.

I think the closest equivalent to the pandemic is World War II. Of course, this was a domestic war or battle against the virus, trying to deal with the public health consequences and the economic consequences as well.

I voted for trillions of dollars of Federal spending, something I never thought I would do in the face of an emergency, a global emergency.

But there is no emergency that exists for an infrastructure bill. This is part of the bread and butter of what governments do at the local level, the State level, and at the Federal level, and it is simply irresponsible and reckless to borrow more money from future generations and to throw gasoline on the fire that is already burning when it comes to inflation in pursuit of a bill

that everybody will probably, ultimately, if given enough and opportunity, will ultimately come up with a negotiated bipartisan outcome.

I also am not going to vote to proceed to a bill that my constituents, the 29 million people I represent—they don't know what is in the bill either.

Well, all this doesn't sound like a recipe for success. These are the types of things that typically would be ironed out before you bring a bill to the floor. It is obvious this legislation is not ready for prime time, not even close.

As I said, the specifics of the bill are still being negotiated by our colleagues, of course, with the White House. We are days away from having the opportunity to read a bill, let alone provide the Congressional Budget Office the opportunity to calculate the cost.

Republicans and Democrats may disagree on a lot these days, but I hope we could all agree that it is not wise to advance legislation before you know what is in it.

That is why it is so baffling to me that the majority leader, the Senator from New York, is forcing a vote on this bill before it is even ready.

Of course, that raises a very significant question. Why in the world would he do that? Why is he rushing through with the final stage of what has been a productive bipartisan process?

The only logical conclusion I can come up with is he wants this bill and this bipartisan effort to fail.

Why else would he push forward with a vote when he knows it is doomed from the start?

I believe the Senator from New York wants this vote to fail because he really wants to go the partisan route; namely, the big, ugly, multitrillion dollar spending spree that BERNIE SANDERS and others have been advocating.

He doesn't need Republican votes to do that, and he can implement some of the most radical policies on the far left's wish list, things like the Green New Deal, massive tax hikes, crippling new economic regulations.

It is pretty obvious that has been the goal all along. Why else would the President himself say, once he negotiated a bipartisan deal: Well, I am not going to sign this bipartisan deal until we pass our partisan wish list. There is now \$3 trillion proposed. It is for the same reason NANCY PELOSI said she is not going to let the bipartisan bill, even were we to pass it, see the light of day until she knows that the \$3 trillion tax-and-spending spree is successful, which will require all 50 Democratic Senators plus the Vice President.

It is just strange to me to see a designed-to-fail strategy, unless it is for some political purpose.

So, Senator SCHUMER, if you are listening, please don't do it. Call off the vote. Let the bipartisan group finish their work. Don't set up a vote that will fail just because you want to ap-

pease the far left of your party, because if the vote happens and we don't have bill text or a cost estimate by the time it rolls around, it will necessarily fail.

VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT

Mr. President, on another matter, for more than four decades, the Crime Victims Fund has provided critical funding for survivors, victims, and their families. In Texas and across the country, this funding provides lifesaving support and services for survivors. It supports shelters that provide refuge to victims of domestic violence. It enables critical programming at rape crisis centers and legal services at child advocacy centers. It provides direct compensation for victims and their families in the wake of serious trauma.

I could go on and on naming the countless ways that the Crime Victims Fund supports vital services in our communities, but one of the most remarkable aspects about the Crime Victims Fund is that none of it comes from taxpayers. It is all covered by criminal fines and penalties.

The only downside of this funding stream is that it comes with a fair amount of uncertainty. There is no guaranteed amount that will be deposited into the fund each year, and recent years have brought far less money than is needed by the demand.

In fiscal year 2020, for example, the funding disbursement decreased by 25 percent, and crime victims service organizations have been told to expect even more cuts. We can't let that happen. It is time to address these shortfalls in the Crime Victims Fund and safeguard critical resources for victims and survivors.

I have been proud to work on a bipartisan basis with Senators GRAHAM, DURBIN, and a long list of colleagues to restore this critical funding through the VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act. This legislation brings critical new funding sources to the Crime Victims Fund without asking the American taxpayer to do more.

It makes important changes to the Crime Victims Act which will send more money to the States for crime victim compensation programs and gives States more flexibility to spend the money when and where needed.

As I said, this legislation has broad bipartisan support. More than 60 Senators have cosponsored the bill, and it has been endorsed by 1,700 organizations, including 120 in Texas alone. These absolutely outstanding organizations and law enforcement stand behind the crucial commonsense reforms of the VOCA Fix Act and have called on Congress to pass the bill. So I hope we can deliver soon.

This afternoon, I expect the Senate to vote on the VOCA Fix Act to protect the solvency of this vital funding. The Crime Victims Fund brings justice to survivors, victims, and families in the wake of serious trauma. This legislation will protect the solvency and longevity of that fund and reverse the dev-

astating funding cuts we have seen in recent years.

I hope we can send this legislation to the President's desk as soon as possible so critical programs across the country can continue to serve our communities.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Iowa.

CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today I come to the floor to discuss an issue that I have raised during the course of multiple Republican and Democrat administrations. This is a problem that crosses political boundaries, whether you have a Republican or Democrat President. That issue is responding to legitimate and valid congressional oversight requests.

In my time as a public servant, I have seen my fair share of unresponsive government, sometimes downright obstructive government. I have seen it rear its ugly head from decade to decade. There is nothing more eroding to public faith than an unresponsive executive branch that believes that it only answers to the President and not to the U.S. Congress and perhaps, most importantly, we the people.

Based on my interactions with the Biden administration's Justice Department and its component Agencies—specifically, the FBI—the current officials in charge of those Agencies are, at best, unresponsive public servants. That goes all the way to the top, to the President, because the buck stops there.

As I say to many nominees, either you are going to run your Department or the Department runs you. Right now, it looks like the Justice Department is running the Attorney General's office, and that is a great big shame.

I voted to confirm the Attorney General. I had high hopes he would follow through on his public statements of ridding the Department of political infection. Instead, I fear he has taken the Justice Department to new politically charged heights.

To date, I haven't received a full or complete response to a single oversight request from the Justice Department. As one example, on February 3 of this year and March 9 of this year, Senator JOHNSON and I asked the Department about Nicholas McQuaid. Mr. McQuaid is the Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division, of which Mr. Polite will be taking his place upon confirmation.

McQuaid was employed by a law firm until January 20 of this year and worked with Christopher Clark, whom Hunter Biden reportedly hired to work on his Federal criminal case.